



Basketball Flip-flop

By R. Shawn Lewis

Basketball here at Gardner-Webb is turning upside down. The men, once ranked as high as 12th in the nation this season, are struggling. The women, a team that everyone wanted to play at the beginning of the season, are on fire. What has caused this turn-around.

On the men's side of the coin, being ranked in the NAIA poll was probably the worst thing that could have happened to them. For one, it happened much too early in the season. The team was young and untested, and this is showing now. Another bad thing that comes with being high-rated early, is the fact that all of the teams around began to hunt for the Bulldogs. Also lately, it seems like the rims of the Paul Porter Arena have been safety sealed. The men are not hitting from the outside, which, in turn, clogs up the middle.

Things can change however, if the Bulldogs can just start canning some outside shots and Stan Easterling can bring back the intensity of days-gone-by. At press time, the Bulldogs were 12-6, which is not bad, but definitely could be better. With a good finish, the playoffs are possible.

The women Runnin' Bulldogs, on the other hand, are the talk of the district. These ladies, the majority of whom are freshmen, are excelling on the court and in the classroom. They won the inaugural Alston Bridges Barbeque Invitational Tournament in impressive style, posting victories over Montreat-Anderson and NCAA-Division II Wofford. At press time, the women Runnin' Bulldogs were 15-4 and seemingly unbeatable.

In case you have not seen a ladies game this year, they more than live up to the name Runnin' Bulldogs. The high-scoring team is led by Frieda Lawrence and Benita Tilley, who has made an incredible comeback after being ineligible last season. Coach Bud Black has the team in shape mentally and physically.

Soccer Update

By Michelle O'Brien

Though officially in the off-season, the Gardner-Webb soccer team has not been simply taking it easy. The team has increased its skill level through rigorous indoor practices and has increased its size through the acquisition of two new players: Jorge Lopez and Sean Carswell. The team is preparing for upcoming indoor games by lifting weights and running. They are expecting their efforts to pay off in a tournament to be held at Warren Wilson College. Following the tournament, the players will have one week off before beginning another week of practice in anticipation of upcoming weekend tournaments that will take place here on campus.

These tournaments will be indoor "mini-ball" games played on a basketball surface using smaller goals and only five players on each side. The sport is played like soccer, though it is faster-paced and higher-scoring. The emphasis is on quickness, agility, and an accurate counter attack, so there is never a lack of action. Spectators will not be disappointed!



Stan Easterling under pressure

Imperials Free the Fire

By R. Shawn Lewis

The "cutting edge" of contemporary Christian music came to Gardner-Webb College January 26, 1989. The Imperials, celebrating their 25th anniversary and owners of numerous Grammy and Dove awards, "freed the fire" of God's love in the Dover Theatre. From the moment that the eager crowd of Gardner-Webb students began arriving until the moment that the students-turned-roadies began breaking down the set, a mystical presence filled the auditorium.

At first sight, the group appeared to be a mixture of two different bands (I thought maybe Sawyer Brown and the Statler Brothers joined together), with two rather distinguished "clean cut" men on opposite ends and two long-haired "youngins" sandwiched in the middle. Unknowing students began to regret that they didn't stay in the dormitory and do homework. But as soon as the Imperials began their first set by saying, "Let's groove!", these unknowing quickly turned for the better. After performing several cuts off of their most recent lp, *Free the Fire*, the Imperials jumped into a medley of contemporary Christian standards that had even the most reserved members of the standing-room-only crowd dancing and clapping their hands for the Lord. The four-some, which was on a three-day tour, enticed their audience not only through their innovative sounds, but also through their sharing of God's love to the audience in form of testimony.

After 2 1/2 hours of entertaining and sheer "groovin'", the Imperials were ready to hit the sack. Realizing this fact, I decided not to interview one of the Imperials, but instead I choose to interview Brian Wooten, the lead guitarist of the Imperials' back-up band. Mr. Wooten joined the Imperials back-up band a year ago and has not regretted a minute of it.

Where do you go from the top?

"In contemporary Christian music, there isn't a top. The bottom line is we have to serve the Lord and be obedient to what God has told us to do."

What about all of the problems in other fields of Christian outreach?

"He's [God] cleaning it up. He's cleaning house. But they can get right with God."

What advise do you have for the young people of the world?

"The time is now. Don't waste any more time. Put God first in your life."

The performance by the Imperials at Gardner-Webb when combined with the recent performance by Bash-n-the-Code and the upcoming performance by Phil Keaggy makes Gardner-Webb one of the hottest, if not the hottest, spots on the contemporary Christian music scene today. And the future can only get better.